CLAIMS:

1. A method for use in a layer 2 tunneling protocol (L2TP) sender, the method comprising the steps of:

sending packets directed to an L2TP peer; and

initiating a recovery process upon detection of multiple messages from the L2TP peer that the L2TP peer is still waiting for a prior transmitted packet.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the multiple messages are negative acknowledgements.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the initiating step includes the step of sending a packet that includes a "Reset *Sr*" (*R-bit*) indicator for resetting a next received sequence number, *Nr*, value at the L2TP peer.

4. A method for use in a layer 2 tunneling protocol (L2TP) sender, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a packet from an L2TP peer, the received packet including a next received sequence number, *Nr*; value;

determining if the *Nr* value represents a negative acknowledgement; and

if a predetermined number of such negative acknowledgements have been received, initiating a recovery process with the L2TP peer.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the recovery process includes the step of sending a packet that includes a "Reset *Sr*" (*R-bit*) indicator for resetting a next received sequence number, *Nr*, value at the L2TP peer.

6. A method for use in a layer 2 tunneling protocol (L2TP) sender, the method comprising the steps of:

sending packets directed to an L2TP peer; and

initiating a recovery process upon detection of either multiple messages from the L2TP peer that the L2TP peer is still waiting for a prior transmitted packet, or if a predetermined payload time-out occurs with respect to the prior transmitted packet.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the multiple messages are negative acknowledgements.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein the initiating step includes the step of sending a packet that includes a "Reset *Sr*" (*R-bit*) indicator for resetting a next received sequence number, *Nr*, value at the L2TP peer.

9. A packet interface for use in forming a layer 2 tunneling protocol (L2TP) sender, the packet interface comprising:

a communications interface for sending packets directed to an L2TP peer; and

a processor for initiating a recovery process upon detection of multiple messages from the L2TP peer that the L2TP peer is still waiting for a prior transmitted packet.

10. The packet interface of claim 9 wherein the multiple messages are negative acknowledgements.

11. The packet interface of claim 9 wherein the processor sends a packet that includes a "Reset *Sr*" (*R-bit*) indicator for resetting a next received sequence number, *Nr*, value at the L2TP peer as part of the initiated recovery process.

12. A packet interface for use in forming a layer 2 tunneling protocol (L2TP) sender, the packet interface comprising:

a communications interface for receiving a packet from an L2TP peer, the received packet including a next received sequence number, *Nr*; value; and

a processor for determining (a) if the *Nr* value represents a negative acknowledgement; and (b) if a predetermined number of such negative acknowledgements have been received, initiating a recovery process with the L2TP peer.

13. The packet interface of claim 12 wherein the processor sends a packet that includes a "Reset *Sr*" (*R-bit*) indicator for resetting a next received sequence number, *Nr*, value at the L2TP peer as part of the initiated recovery process.